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HUNTING

By Matthew Fair

Sometimes a man can be out, you know, just walking, and he might be Hunting. Not the kind of hunting, necessarily, that you might associate with the word. He might be lying awake at night, in his room in the dark, waiting until he can feel the streets emptying. When the streets are empty, he might send himself out. He might reach down into himself, into the prisms of himself that separate things and radiate news to him, like a magician, and extract a bird of some kind. This bird he would dispatch to help him hunt. You might not be aware of this. You might not be able to tell, from the guy's looks, what he is doing. This is News I'm telling you.

I have bloodshot eyes. These tiny systems of veins are the roots of Trees of Dreams. I'm hunting. Down in the valley, down in the short and tall grass places: separating the interlaced stuff; the basket-woven stuff: winds, etc. have woven them at random, leaving them awkwardly laced, and I am unlacing them a bit.

In some places, little meadow spiders have spun, using the random frameworks of blades as foundations. I'm not careful about these things. I just use my fingers to unthatch the blades; put my foot in like a Fuller Brush Man trying to hold open a door. Opening the grass's straw doors.

The sun is extending the treetops, edging bird's nests, etc. with tiny flames. I glance up at these things, arms plunged deep in grass, crouching down. I examine 'everywhere.' Into the moss, lichen, etc. on the meadow floor; through tiny magnifiying glasses of water droplets: tiny, clear, abacus-like structures on the filaments and miniature clotheslines erected by the tiny, poison landed octopi. Over the spiders' shoulders; into their private work.

There is a drone in the brain such as one might hear when tapping a telephone. Such as one near an electrical grid might hear: an acoustical aura, suggesting intricate transactions of electrical commerce underneath the surface: like the dinosaurs beneath the earth, stretching their ways through ages, to mount the particular elevators of trees by way of the subway entrances of roots, or folding their ways through geological rock-tides to collapse into fossil and coal.

Now the sun is inside the forest, casual, pushing its hands down the trees' pockets, whistling through birds' throats. As if someone switched on lights in the log rooms. Odor of muscadine, music of dusk

owls, rustle of startled ptarmigans. Beautiful in the twilight as I delve and explore and research the terrain. Moist odors among dark ferns. The bracken. Turning up serrated fern-leaves is like looking at the undersides of starfish: lines of seed-pods, militarily arranged. Not what I am looking for.

At dark I have to wait until the moon rises. Maple leaves, huge and green, are like clusters of waxed green starfish. I am hundreds of miles from the nearest coast; these starfish must have migrated surruptitiously, underground, by underground streams, finally to follow the dinosaurs, and finally to perch in these dark branches and stems. I am saying these things waiting for moonlight . I don't know. What am I doing? I don't know; I'm waiting.

There are no lucid formulae. No distinct roads. Sometimes an image comes up in the mind, clearer and clearer as time goes on: a bare tree, alone on an island of rock, a woman's voice in the branches. Always when I envision this, the voice speaks strangely to me. I am not mistaking this. If you can imagine a place where all rivers cross, you can imagine this tree and the voice in it, among the branches. It is like the Word at the matrix of the crossing of all languages: the Common Word. It is issued like a mutant from the cross-breeding machines of dreams, to which I must give due.

Does this come across to you? Has this ever occurred to you? Sometimes there is such an intensity in me: like someone has turned up my Volume control. The senses! I can feel floods stalking the mountain folds, rain maneouvering the passes. The sense of touch becomes so acute, that I can feel from a distance; can feel colors. Smell so accurate I can smell histories of grass-blades, from every animal that touched it to the mineral ingredients that make it; smell out its ancestry through the slow genes of grasses, smell distances through the wind that passes through them, smell way back down into their miscrscopic corridors and tiny valleys where bacteria track their tiny spoor with unseeable footprints. When these things happen I am charged. The Hunt is quickened.

Nymph, Dryad, Mermaid, Undine, Siren, Vallyrie; I am hunting. Can you hear me? Sometimes things are so acute that one sense is enough: surpasses the others. I can smell down into my own chromosomes, as they backtrack me along the erratic tracks of genes, as I am sidetracked down a million lives through dinosaurs and anemonae, to the edge of the sea and then in. It seems to me I did not come this way.

It is difficult! The symbols enter my waking eyes like minerals etc. Enter the tiny roots that hold my eyes like stones, and pass on up to blossom in the refined oxygens of dreams. Voice in the Tree, My Sunlight, My Chlorophyll; Thy Voice. Thy Voice.

Above me, stars seek and spy among leaves, push through bough faces. The secret agents of the grass decode the sidereal messages, and decipher it in their own, slow mysterious language, there to pass it along. The woman's voice contains this language of grass, as well as the shy melodies of willows, the kindly dialects of pines. The dreams of the grass enter me through the pores, feed in their tiny wells. All is hushed in the little known streets of the meadow.

The sky is on its side, like the huge inner surface of an ingenuous cirrus conch. It's as if the moon has wound it up, and its only music-box release is through the forest, through which huge light schooners pass; it seems to have let it go to unwind like a tin soldier or a clock, whistling, whirring, and humming. Inside the conch's rim sweep the late-night royal ghosts of oceans. The clicking is not of a machine, but the wings of insects, vocal among the cicadas and folded dandelions.

The wraith among the cirrus comb is like the wraith of blood among a dead man's ribs. Looking high enough, I am almost in a temporal vertigo; almost there again, eye to the distant, cerulean curve of the earth, eye to the sky; rolling on some beach while the stars shouted, snapped and grinned above me, and the sea, moon-captained, steered in to dispel them in their phosphorescent water-forms, like a policeman breaking up a brawl.

How did I come to lay out here in the darkness? I sometimes frantically try to tune my memories like a radio, but there is only static.

Turn, says the sailing moon-forest, lord of the branched light and shadow-shaper, turn thy profile to me, strange one, out of thy full face of darkness.

Hunting, hunting. Nightly Spring comes to my Tree of Dreams. They blossom and carry me. Sometimes I glance up at smudges of smoke rising from beyond the forest. I associate nothing here. This is in the day, after failing to tune the most secret radios of my memory. Also the distant sound of traffic reaches me; but I translate it into a poor mechanical imitation of surf.

When the stars are in the talking tree, the voice of the woman is crowned with a tiara. I close my eyes and see it, see the Milky Way in the late night come down to mistress these hills as I wander.

I seem not always to be in the forest. It seems I hunt also in long streets at night, in empty avenues. The long cold roads: they come back to me in some of the scrap heap of shallow dreaming, that I must tumble past on my way to road-signs that the cross-breeding machines sometimes allow. The frozen alleys; the houses falling back, dissolving; the streetlamps dwindling into a million fireflies. I glide through; float through; fall through. Above, around, across, below: the billion lights that guide me: the giant light against which I beat my moth wings. I must be riding, as I am holding reins.

Now I lay me down to dream, and now my dreams leap over me. Gaunt nocturnal faces, paper lanterns in the trees. The

moon in the upper branches stitching some new dark elaborate nightmare: the voice of the woman in the tree; the Tree itself, its arms uptwining.

In a dream I walk among the lustrous masques, the japanese lanterns lighting my way among the trees. Each cold street leads me back to these trees; back to the ancient forest. Great shades lumber aimlessly, the blurred silhouettes of ships and dinosaurs. The moon is an enamel smile in incandescent hems of branches.

One tree, three-pronged, stands rooted where a hill of mist unravells borrowed moonlight, standing like an organpipe. Dark eyries deck the highest boles. I am standing, bare feet deliquescent in scything blades of mist. There is something auric in mystery; something vocal.

I am naked, hair white as linen. I am a thousand years old. The ground comes up to me, and in the sky the moon flees, dodges gulfs and arroyos. The Trees Etch My Permanent Address On The Wind That Passes And I Run So Fast I Pass The Wind. There is a sound like footsteps: it is only my hearbeat, running fast down empty roads, its loud footsteps ringing through the dark illogic of moon-priested trees.

Harboring great black nests, as if the topmost branches had caught lost tumbleweeds a thousand miles from any desert, the branches of the Triton tree a twisted landing stage, its roots a loading stage; the nests riding halfway to the blank substratum of the sky.

My arms are earthward, the fingers churning into mist, the mist twisting upward; the mist flowing by me. I Am Panning For Life In The Sperm Rivers. The mist is wisps of cilia, age old and newborn; the mist is chrysalis: swaddling clothes around a child that I am holding in my arms.

I Am Losing Hold Of My Face's Shape. I Clutch The Earth With Insane Strength.

I look into the bitter brightness of the child's eyes. Maybe it's the white mist that makes them seem so. The night wind is ringing in the trees. In The Tree. Where am I going? How long must I go through these things before I find what it is I am hunting for, Woman of the Leafless Tree? Has someone carved a heart into your bark? Is that the heart of my idiot visions?

There is a half-moon crown, moon-colored, on the child's head. I have a question for this being: I take it in my arm's crook and raise it in order to speak in its ear. When I speak, the distant hills echo my words, singing and singing.

The moon is rising from one of the eyries. As I speak again in the child's small ear, once more the singsong echo rises from the hills.

Is This Child Some Kind Of Shell?

I am given gifts that are not explained.

I look into the child's eyes, and see that they have retained the image of long and wingless ships, that have passed across the sky so quickly that only a baby could see them, bright eyes up toward the stars. I am Hunting. Hunting.

The child hunts for a nipple but there are none in that place. I am rising, the child in my elbow crook, rising to the Trident's top. There I lay the baby back, down in an empty nest; it cries and its eyes are bright; but I can feel a deeper sleep searching for me in the forest. I have to hurry to find a place to curl up in the mist. The wind is rising. As I am found I see the child reaching for the moon as if it were a nurse to suckle him. Then the baby goes black like a lamp.

I am tumbling, somersaulting; and I land gently again among the grasses, open my eyes to see a real moon lying like an abalone derelict a thousand miles over hills and ferns.

Is it the woman in the Tree that arraigns these dreams to me? What is going on? Spider webs cat's-cradle the moonlight: tiny riggings of ships. And I am down among them, down among the grass-blades, far from ships and stars, far from streets and streetlights. Far From Any Hope Of Knowing.

But I go on hunting.

I may walk along and suddenly crash through my own husk, enter the darkness like a stalk, and examine my way upward.

The long, cold, excruciatingly empty streets: will they lead me to the staircase of a leafless tree with a woman's voice, that I might climb to find what I am hunting? The streets that are strung with a billion tiny lamps? The streets though which I am always, nightly, passing?

When the sky examines a traveller's face, it finds that the lines are ledger lines. With each step the traveller prepares his final concert, prepares to consummate his journey with a symphony of all the steps, a symphony of all the musical notations left like tiny anchors on the road. If the sky was a music reader, it could not but rock to the ballad, and know it as a sacrament no voice is capable of singing.

I have relegated myself to the Hunt. I assign myself and I resign myself to Hunting. I am employed by the ancient travesties of light and shadow, dark evening trees and discardments of moon. The beauty of these things distract me, but the talking tree returns me; the distractions do not make me lose my way, my path, which is anywhere but where I've been, which is Hunting; but they tax my salary of dreams.

Hundreds of miles I must travel. Sometimes the forest is one giant chiseled ark of jewels, and I am hunting the mother lode. The secret cache. The lost chord. Something. I tap the blossoms, the dandelions like a hummingbird, and in the morning real hummingbirds hover, and the music in the treetops carries me. At noon, I am swimming upriver, and the sun is a lonely streetlamp on a country road overgrown with too many Springs. At dusk, a hush comes down, and the moon turns the trunks and the faces to marble.

Also each night repeat the grim rehearsals. Wild insects click like castanets. I close my eyes, and the Tree begins to speak: like a honeycomb; a witch's hundred-fingered hand cast in music. A sermonizer, raving to a hunting pilgrim. The Tree-voice, The Triton child, and the Royal Frozen Roads.

When the moon comes down to switch on the trees, the faces in the boughs are the only human faces I encounter. They stare at me, I stare at them. We do not avert our eyes. The years are long, and I can not stop hunting, and the gargoyles in the branches hand their paper lanterns over, so that they may kindly light my way among the oiled silhouettes and junked shadows. Sometimes I wish the voice would sing me a lullaby, and that I could go to sleep and never rise.

Again, the hard days push me to the darker edge of things. Dreams, and dreams of dreams. The sunset is an arcus, stained glass panes through trees. The sun is out on the balcony, weighing its troubles.

And I am running. Down, down the lonesome streets; hiding, rising; riding. Is anyone watching? It may seem that I am shrinking as I retreat into the distance: the simple laws of perspective. But actually I am staying in the same spot, and dwindling to a child as I run. It is as if I were suspended in an intricate, unutterably fragile chandelier: the billion streetlights encompass me.

Is there a mother to rock me in her arms, take me to her breast?

I am lonely, I am weeping. Any mother I might have had is no longer with me. I am soaring, and the fireflies whirl and dance and die around my shoulders. I am soaring down the dark, lonesome road.

And at the road's end, always at the road's end, Always The Forest, Roaring Towards Me, Quickly, Qucikly **Crashing.**

The Road's End Exploding Into Me.

The Trees Catch Me Full In Their Arms.

....And then to awaken in the grass again, and the inexorable voice of the Tree.

The rising hum of the brain, distinct echo of a buried centrifuge, a dynamo. In the morning, the sun begs at the forest's feet. At night, the moon, like a child, pulls itself by branches up the trees. I never tire of this repetition.

The dreams, or whatever they are, fluctuate. Sometimes, submerged, they glide with absolute celerity in darkness, deep beneath my daytime hunting. Other times, more and more, I sense them surfacing. I may be just walking, searching, and suddenly I walk over the edge. I feel my heart, like a crazy moth, or a wild sea-animal, crashing at my ribs, running at me from a distance with exploding footprints. I roll up slowly in my egg, and the lights go out, and I am falling down the road again. This happens more frequently now. The days pass in sequences of Dream and Forest Hunt. Now and then the wind carries a fragrance or flavor of oceans, and, travelling with me through the woods, carries along a faint music of singing whales.

What kind of moth am I, frantic now in darkest glades, aching for a streetlight, crazy to be bottled? What kind of window do I beat my insect brains upon? I am waiting to sleep, but sleep does not come easy, waiting to sleep, forged somehow by the blazing lamp against which I beat out my brains. I am ready to die. Sometimes ready to thrash around wildly and loose myself of my coat of dreams. To bite into the bark of trees that are not the trees I seek. To harrow the earth with my hands. There is no one with me. I have no memory, but days and nights and years of hunting.

I close my eyes, and someone switches on the streetlights. I flap and rage against them, and I slide on through them. The Trojan Horse I'm riding hurtling in an absurd race. I ride inside it, rolled up like a fetus in an egg. It rolls me under like the sea's great combers. The night by intimidation asking for my own dark parts of the sand and trees. Out in the Streets, the silence works like a sunken ship with the hand of the sea over its mouth. The wingless ships in the child's eyes, luminous in the glittering dark. The steed is a brass shell or a glass house.

These are the things that people my dreams. Or is it the dark, thin nightmares of the grasses that my skin absorbs like sunlight? Or could it be the bedtime stories sung me by a voice whose only body is a cradle of branches? I don't know the answers. I can only reach down, and switch on my dreams.

Sometimes a man can be out, you know, just walking, and he might be hunting. He may have hunted through a forest, night and day, alone, for as long as he could remember; have no contact with the outside world, have no dreams but excessive ones, of Shell Children, Trees with Women's voice, Triton trees with giant nests. He may have recurring nightmares of running, or riding hands on reins, uncontrolled down a dark road which always ends with a forest crash. So you see, it would not be necessarily the kind of hunting that you might associate with the word.

And you might think it perfectly normal, after this News I have passed along to you, for such a man, when he comes within earshot, withing a short walk of the ocean, to stand in reverence, with the forest all around him like a giant, intricate clock, wound up and unwinding through him.

Hold, this flesh, this newcomer, this transgressor, Hold Hard, or I may suddenly dive into the earth, wrench my way up the trail, the long trail the dinosaurs, the starfish, and the fallen leaves have taken, up inside the tubes, the trunks of certain trees, and burst out in a cold shower of leaves. And when the lights go out, and when the Dead End comes, I hear nothing. Nothing but the eloquence of a tree-voice that seems to be naming me a species of the sea, that seems to be calling me by my own sea-name, that arrays the stars like a rosary that I must wear, or die with the hacked sea branches clocking round my face, or die with the voice's fingers crushing my face to the seed of a bud.

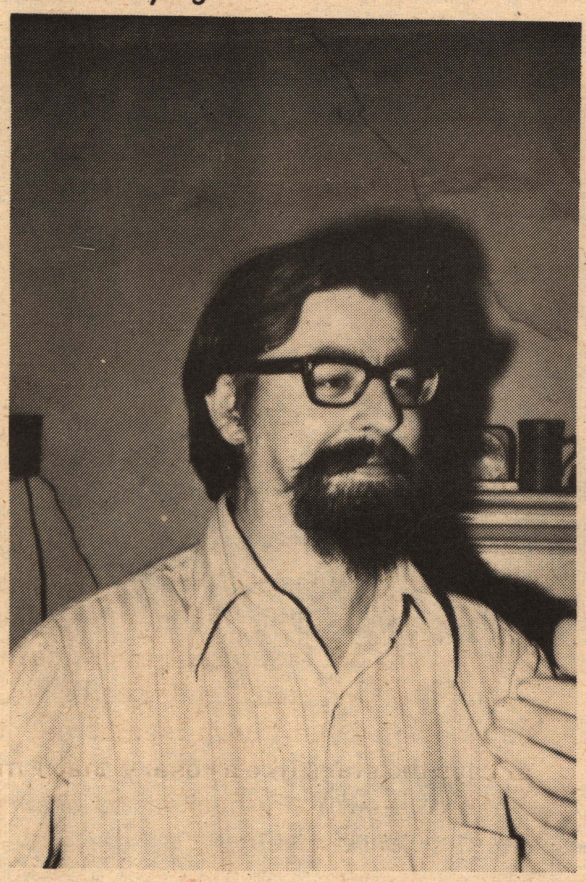
At last, before my eyes, the Triton Tree. Any minute now my heart may burst into applause, or flames. Any minute now my heart may catch up to me and enter me. It is dusk, the moon has not yet risen. This is not a dream. The tree is ancient, the eyries have gone, and there is only one turret remaining. The hum in the brain rises slightly. I am swaying on my feet. The elongated fingers of the talking tree reach into me, draw out the flame that has raged for the Hunt. She withdraws the flame, weaving and weaving, and casts it on her branches like a red rose dress. She has made my heart a tool, and the tool makes music for her. The root of her shadow grasps at the Triton tree, and the roots of the Tree grasp this world over which I walk.

I look down to where, in the dream, I had picked up the Shell-Child. Segments of carapace lie broken, half-buried among the grass, and I bend down to touch some of the ancient shell, some of the ancient egg, and know that the hunt is ending, and know that the Speaking Tree is not far away, and I am back on the frozen road, reining my wild horses in: Taking back the old spurs of the centuries, Rigel, Vega, Betelgeuse, Andromeda, and my last spur Sol, I am grinning, and over them I draw my private dark until they are crazy eyes and the night is a hangman's mask. Help! I am crying, fists on the barking reins.

And the Dream sails up and down my arms, flickering in tune with the old electric dreams of starships mad with travelling and aching for the gentle death of rust or the glorious death of meteors, and the tree holds open its arms, and I crash again, crash again, crash again and roll in the rolling waves, roll in a driftwood dream, inward to the sand and the forest's edge.

I know when I reach the island of the Tree, I will climb into her boughs, her arms that caught my fall, and look up into the sky, now proud with stars, and as I look into them, I know that I'll be looking down, back down the long, cold road.

Then I think that I shall understand what She is saying.



EMPTY THOUGHTS

I have purged

my soul again,

and the vacuum

of my thoughts

is killing -

I wonder

if she's asleep yet

or if she's reading

my sonnet,

or if she put it

under her pillow

and made a wish on it,

or

if she's getting her dog

housebroken

at my expense.

By John E. O'Neill

COASTING

a short film

by martin kava

cast:

MAN 50's
BOY 20's
VOICE male, strong

Scene 1 NIGHT INTERIOR CEILING LIGHT

Roomshot. Plain walls, high ceiling, single ceiling bulb illuminating, heavy shadows. Window has wire mesh covering it. Floor isstrewn with bottles, cereal boxes, food packaging and refuse in general. At one end of room is narrow black door, at other, a large iron bar-and-wire bed. On bed is man in dirty pyjamas. Is filling his socks with hot oatmeal.

Man's face, intent on project.

Medium shot, man on bed, pulling on socks. Does this gingerly.

Roomshot. Man grunts, crawls under bedsheet. Stops grunting. Peers around room intensely before snapping off light (with chain which dangles over bed).

Darkness. Further grunting. Silence.

Scene 2 DAY INTERIOR

Gloom. Meshed window admits weak light of morning. Wet brick wall is view beyond.

Close shot, man in bed, staring at camera.

Medium shot of man in bed. He slowly rises, sits on edge of bed. Plunks down feet to break hardened oatmeal. Pulls feet from socks. Inspects feet.

MAN: As young as yesterday.

Roomshot. Man walks briskly about room, garbage bouncing off feet.

MAN: *(greeting imaginary beings)* Good morning. Good morning. How are you? Fine, thanks, fine. Hello. Hello. Off to a fine start. My, what a fine day. A fine day! Good morning. Good morning.

Scene 3 DAY INTERIOR

Close shot, man's head and shoulders from behind.
from side

From front. Man looking down.

MAN: Davy. Davy boy. I don't know what you're doing. *(crying)* I don't know what you're doing. *(crying changes to expression of sheer pleasure)*

Roomshot. Mn on floor.

Fade.

Scene 4 NIGHT INTERIOR

Darkness.
Door slams open admitting cold brilliant light.
Boy flung into room.

Shot of man, sitting up in bed. Expression of utter shock.

VOICE: *(off)* You creep! You ever try it again I'll have you put up tight. No light. NOTHING.
Door slams shut. Darkness. Long silence.

MAN'S VOICE: They...they brought you back?

BOY'S VOICE: He said I wasn't right. He said he could have me made silly if he wanted to.

Long silence.
Roomshot. Light is snapped on by man, still in bed. Boy is at foot of bed. He has been badly beaten. He is smiling. Man's gaze is transfixed on him.

BOY: Ain't doing so good, eh?

MAN: *(anger, fear, pleasure)* Who did it? Who?

BOY: The guy who always wears the Brookes Brothers tweed.

MAN: *(pleasure)* He still around?

BOY: *(after a pause)* I heard from him you're next.

Man's face.

MAN: No. No. Another coupla days and I'll be OK. They almost always let me out to see the garden out back. Davy never denies me that.

BOY: (off) Davy isn't around.

Medium shot. Man and boy on bed.

MAN: *(laughs)* Wha....what do you mean he's not here?

BOY: *(sighs with pleasure)* Sold the place. He's gone to this expensive place in France or Nevada or Madrid. Some place classy, y'know? Did this....four....five weeks ago. Guy in the tweed let me know.

MAN: Just another coupla days and I'll be OK. Just a couple more.

Fade.

Scene 5 DAY INTERIOR

Close shot of boy by window. Snow is falling beyond. The brick wall is black, wet.

BOY: DAVY IS SOME CREEP. Hasn't even dropped a line. *(long pause)* Bet he's with that girl he wouldn't beat even when she asked him to.

MAN: *(off)* Davy? No, no, no, he was a real lady man. Always perfumed, clean shaven. Different sorta guy. Real torpedo. He'd pour hot oil on 'em, poke forks in their legs...even stuff 'em through car windows....does that himself now and then....jeez is he a mess of plastic surgery....but, nope, never would he just straight beat a girl.

BOY: Davy gave me better suits than who the hell runs the joint now.

MAN: *(off)* Jeez, you and your suits. Why'd you come here if you always wanta wear your suits?

BOY: *(after a pause)* Yeah. You get her when you ask her. She gets you when she asks you.

MAN: *(off)* I'd keep off ladies for good. My woman and I came to Davy boy when I was about your age. Couldn't stand living outside. Never regretted it.

BOY: Yeah, well, I'll be leaving soon. I have to keep an eye on everything in my business, stocks, y'know? Couldn't take it forever y'know.

MAN: *(off)* You're jealous.

BOY: I've more dough than you.

MAN: *(off)* Jealous, hah! HAH!

BOY: Your stupid woman cocked off on oatmeal. Just spppooooonned it down and CROAKED!

Man's face, angry.

MAN: Don't ever remind me. Don't you ever remind me.

Roomshot. Room is clogged with more garbage than before. Boy dressed in expensive suit, man in dirty pyjamas. Man is filling socks with oatmeal. Boy continues to stare out window.

BOY: I'm not apologising. *(pause)* You wanta go out to dinner tonight?

MAN: He won't let us. *(looks at door)*

BOY: Could ask.

MAN: Drop dead. *(throws oatmeal sock at boy; misses)*

martin kava a self-portrait

BOY: I'm not eating any more of your junk.

MAN: *(after a pause)* Wonder what Davy boy *is* doing with the girl.

BOY: If he marries her, I'll never talk to him again.

MAN: What about it?

BOY: Well...she...she's...

MAN: Yeah? Yeah?

BOY: She's my mother.

MAN: Your mother? *(bursts into derisive laughter)*

BOY: Yeah, yeah, yeah, OK, OK, OK. *(pause)* We were pretty solid till we met up with ol' Davy. We liked it here so much we joined up. *(pause)* I mean, I beat her up regularly and everything, and we were happy. But, uh, well, Davy just seemed to please her more. Y'know how it goes. *(laughs)* Older men.

MAN: *(who has been laughing continuously)* Yeah, yeah! Older men!

Both laugh in ever-increasing intensity.

Fade.
Scene 6 NIGHT INTERIOR CEILING LIGHT

Some snappy dance music playing. Close shot of man and boy dancing up a storm amid the refuse. The two regard each other with delight.

MAN: You dance so well.

BOY: I studied ballet and theatre for a few years in London.

MAN: Really?

BOY: Yes, yes. I was quite good till I grew bored and came home. Then I got bored at home with all of mother's parties for all her art friends, and came here.

MAN: I say, did you by any chance meet up with Davy at a party?

BOY: Why, yes, yes I did!

MAN: Same here!

BOY: Really? *(laughs artificially; bats lashes)*

MAN: Yes, yes, quite! *(laughs artificially)*

BOY: Naughty Davy. Filthy old chap.

MAN: Pip. Pip. *(kisses boy)*

BOY: Pip. Pip. *(kisses man)*

Abrupt silence. They stop.

Roomshot. Door slams open. Brilliant light floods in.

VOICE: No more dancing or talking. You've had enough.

MAN & BOY: Oh, come on!

VOICE: I SAID THAT IS ALL.

BOY: Money, money, want money?

VOICE: How much?

MAN: *(to boy)* I've got three.

BOY: *(checking wallet)* I've got eight. *(to voice)* Eleven thousand, OK?

VOICE: *(after a pause)* Wellll...OK.

Boy gathers eleven one thousand dollar notes, hands them out door. Door slams shut.

VOICE: *(within)* STOOGES. STOOGES! *(laughs)*

MAN & BOY: Hey!

VOICE: *(within)* No more. I told you no more.

Boy's face, extremely pleased.

Man's face, extremely pleased.

Fade.

Scene 7 DAY INTERIOR

Roomshot. Sunlight slants in through window. Boy in white tropical suit, lying in sunlight. Man on bed, eating oatmeal from sock.

MAN: As young as yesterday.

BOY: They haven't let us outside since Davy left.

MAN: *(stops eating)* Couple more days. It'll be OK.

BOY: It's been seven months.

MAN: Eight. *(resumes eating)*

BOY: It must be pretty in Nice. Just sitting there under a palm with her. Telling her how much her being in the world means to you. Kicking the living universe out of her and loving every minute of it. *(sighs)* God, how beautiful it must be. Boy, boy, boy, Davy.

MAN: Shoot, I'd rather be out back in the garden beating hell outta everybody with the carrots they always have growing.

BOY: I mean I haven't seen a girl for seven months.

MAN: Eight.

BOY: God, I'll bet they all paid him *(pointing at door)* to keep us in here all summer just so they'd kill us with knowing everybody else is out there having fun with the cucumbers and celery and radishes and...

MAN: Carrots! All those long yellow carrots.

BOY: Yeah.

VOICE: *(within)* It's eighty-three, slight breeze, not a cloud in the sky, everybody's in the carrot patch with nothing on, AND I'M NOT LETTING YOU OUT, HO, HO, HO!

MAN & BOY: Creep! Creep! Creep!

Man's face, extreme pleasure.

Boy's face, extreme pleasure.

Roomshot;

Fade.

Scene 8 NIGHT INTERIOR CEILING LIGHT

Medium shot. Man on bed; boy flogging him with cardboard cutouts of mutilated children, boxes, papers, hambones. Man is writhing in pain.

Dissolve to:

Roomshot. Boy tied to door; man singing while slashing boy's suit with razor blade.

Dissolve to:

Roomshot. Man and boy, naked, running around room. They scream and squeal in ecstasy.

Dissolve to:

Medium shot. Man and boy sitting in bed.

VOICE: It's black!

MAN: White!

BOY: Gray! It's gray!

VOICE: BLACK. WHEN I SAY IT'S BLACK. IT'S BLACK.

MAN: Black!

BOY: Black!

VOICE: White! It's white!

BOY: Gray!

MAN: Gray!

VOICE: Gray!

BOY: White! It's white!

MAN: Definitely white.

VOICE: White!

BOY: Black! Black! Black!

Dissolve to:

Close shot. In bed man and boy, staring at ceiling.

MAN: Must be October. Haven't had a good beating like that since before they redumped you in here.

BOY: Four, five decades ago. *(pause)* Not one doll. Not one! Jeez, for the money we pay you'd think they'd send in one, just one who screams on impact of nails across face.

MAN: I've gone without one for nearly twenty years.

BOY: God, god, god, god!

MAN: Wouldn't trade it for anything. This whole agape agony.

BOY: Jeez, god no. You'd have to be nuts.

MAN: *(after a pause)* You wanta beat me up some more?

Fade.

Scene 9 DAY EXTERIOR SUMMER

Elevated long shot. Man and boy are standing naked in large empty parking lot.

VOICE: You are aware of the consequences of being permitted into the garden! You take all responsibilities!

MAN: Guess it's not carrot season.

BOY: They took away all the girls. I think Davy got all the girls.

MAN: Girls? *Girls?* Where are the *carrots*!?

Fade.

Scene 10 NIGHT EXTERIOR FALL

Elevated long shot. Man and boy in same position in empty parking lot. A cold wind drives withered fragments of human beings across the asphalt.

MAN: When will it all come here for us to see it? Forsooth, when?

BOY: What forsooth? What? Who's coming?

Fade.

Scene 11 DAY EXTERIOR WINTER

Elevated long shot. Man and boy in same position in empty parking lot, now covered in snow.

MAN: It's all so pointless.

VOICE: POINTFULLLL!

Slow fade.

Scene 12 DAY EXTERIOR SUMMER

Elevated long shot. Man and boy in same position in empty parking lot. Sound of approaching cars.

A converging circle of cars move into camera vision. Cars are converging on man and boy.

MAN: It has come! Davy boy it has come! May all oats turn to vegetable gardens. Carrots! Carrots! Carrots!

BOY: No. No. No. No. It's all wrong. Someone made a mistake. I wanted a doll to beat, a doll!

MAN: They've finally made the right choice. The door has been opened.

VOICE: I always try not to please.

BOY: Thankyou. Oh, thankyou.

MAN: Blessings of razor burns. Body tied in wire hangers. Soul despised. Thankyou. Thankyou. I am becoming holy in my mind.

The cars have commenced crushing man and boy, as well as crushing each other as cars continue to converge.

BOY: I never thought it would be so superb. So superb!

MAN: Let us not feel pain, but pleasure. Let them not find us here in ignorance, but in blood. Blood! Blood! Glory! Glory!

BOY: Davy boy, ya don't know what yer missin'.

Fade.

Scene 13 DAY EXTERIOR WINTER

Elevated long shot. Heap of cars in parking lot all covered in snow.

MAN: *(off quietly)* You comfortable?

BOY: *(off, quietly)* No.

MAN: Same here.

BOY: Isn't it grand?

MAN: Could spend years like this.

BOY: Let's. *(long pause)* Just one chick, though. Just one to slap.

Fade.

Scene 14 NIGHT INTERIOR CEILING LIGHT

Roomshot. Living remains of man and boy on bed. Boy, neatly dressed in shirt, tie, sports jacket, consists of head, torso, left arm. Man consists of head.

MAN: You...you wanta dump on some of that oatmeal?

BOY: Yeah, sure.

With left arm spoons hot oatmeal on man's head.

MAN: As young as yesterday.

VOICE: *(within)* Youcomfortable in there?

MAN & BOY: No.

VOICE: *(within)* Check with you tomorrow. Have a bad night's sleep. Right?

MAN & BOY: Wrong.

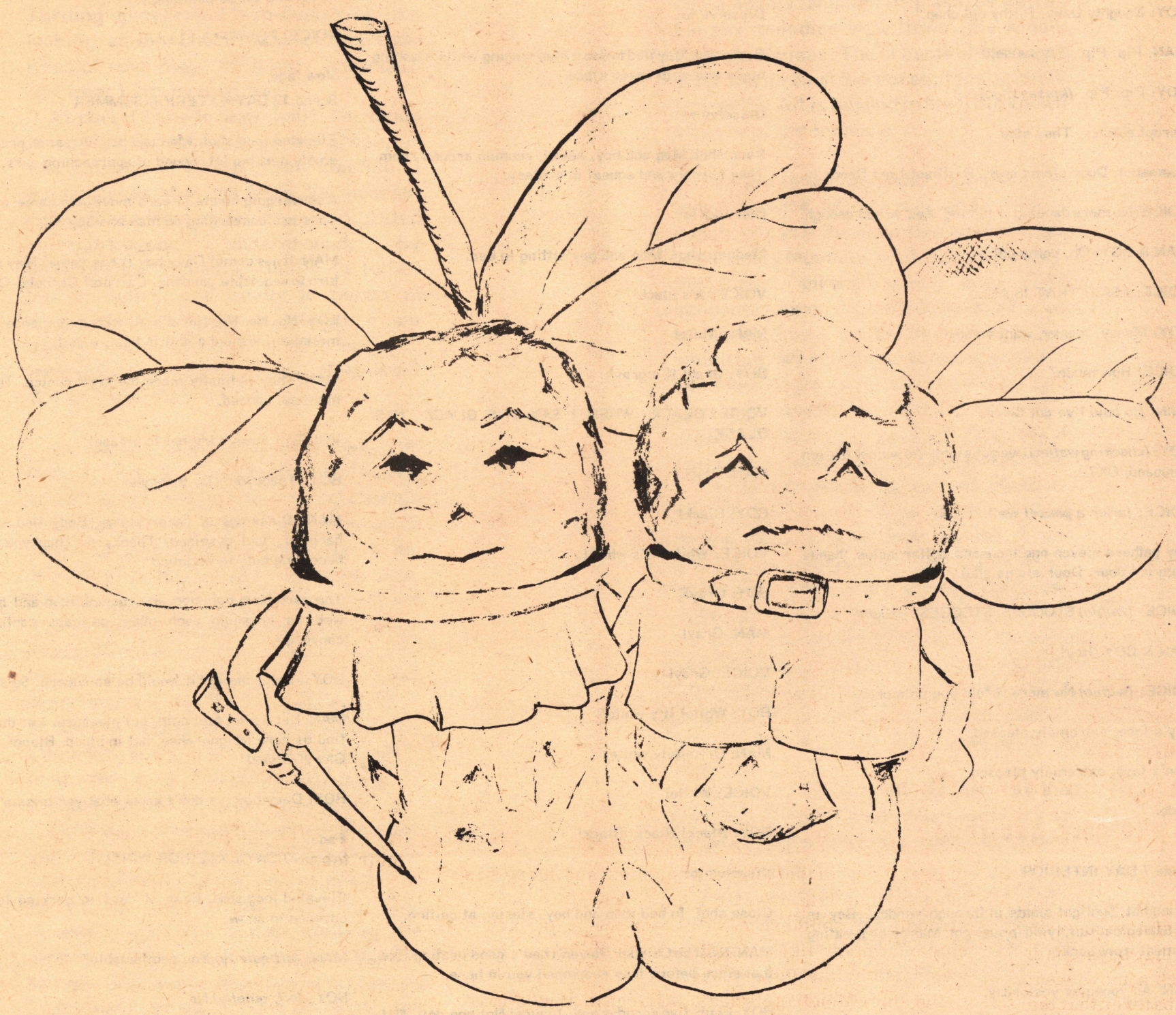
After a moment, a sound of a quickly approaching car. Park of the front end of a large car breaks in through the wall and mesh window. 'DAVY' is painted in neat white letters on car. Man and boy take no notice.

MAN: Hey Davy boy. You fool. Ran away. You don't know what pleasure is.

BOY: *(after a pause; to man)* Wanna dance?

Fade.

FAMINES



Graphic By Mickey

"Look here, mother, one of THEIR old books tells all about this land in the old days. Mother, I believe it is true that things run in parallels, why the book says that centuries ago in this green country of ours, something happened that is the same as what's happening now."

"Calla, child, how can you read and talk of parallels when none of us have touched food for five days and are not likely to touch any for five more?"

"It does hurt my eyes to read, but it takes my mind from my troubles, and what I've found is so very interesting. It is one of THEIR last books, full of generalities, but it does give some picture of what it was like to live so long ago. Oh, mother, how I would have loved to have lived at the Changeover, the book doesn't tell about that, but it does tell of there being another famine."

"Oh, there was another famine alright, just at the time of the Changeover. That was when we became dominant . Ah, Calla, our roots run deep in this beautiful land."

"They never suspected how intelligent we really were, did they mother? When I think of all the millions of us that have gone before..."

"All species suffer the same, Calla, only it took ours longer to be recognized. My grandfather was so wise, he often predicted that we would come into our own. It's too bad that he didn't live to see the Changeover."

"If it hadn't been for the Great Professor we never would have been discovered, would we, mother? 'Tis fitting that his name was Patrick and that he came from the green country."

"It is that."

"A simple mutation was all it took. I wonder that no one found it before. I wonder at least that our intelligence was not recognized."

"Hush, Calla, your father comes."

"Mother, Calla the famine is over. Our hunters have sighted a flock of THEM coming through the mountains. Not many, but enough for a while. 'Tis a good thing that we require so little of that nourishment. THEY are tasty, tasty indeed. Ah, 'tis beautiful to be alive and see the sun rise over the green country. The land that nourishes us shall reclaim us, eh mother?"

"It does that."

"It's fair enough though isn't it, father, after all it's only turn about. THEY killed and devoured us for thousands of years."

"It's fair enough, child. The Great Professor brought us into our true state. When we were taken out of our natural habitat we had to have food. It is ironic that the Professor would have chosen his own kind. But, come now, we must prepare to look after our share. Calla get the knives, and mother, start heating the water. We want to have THEM peeled and boiled in time for the evening meal."

By Angie Jean Jerome